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Georgia Southern University



Men's Basketball Hangs on to Top Missouri State 74-73

The Eagles play UMKC Tuesday at 5 p.m. in the Gulf Coast Showcase.

Marc Gignac

Men's Basketball

Posted: 11/20/2017 5:38:00 PM

ESTERO, Fla. – [Tookie Brown](#) tallied 20 points, five assists, four rebounds and four steals, and Georgia Southern held off a furious rally by Missouri State to top the Bears 74-73 in the first round of the Men's Basketball Gulf Coast Showcase Monday afternoon in Germain Arena.

Brown hit 4-of-6 from 3-point range as the Eagles (4-0) drained 10 as a team. [Ike Smith](#) recorded 19 points and six rebounds, and [Jake Allsmiller](#) scored 13. [Mike Hughes](#) notched 11 points, five rebounds and two steals.

Alize Johnson registered 17 points, 14 rebounds, four assists and a blocked shot for Missouri State (2-2), and J.T. Miller collected 19 points, six rebounds and three assists.

The Eagles start the season with four straight wins for the first time since the 1991-92 season.

The story

Trailing 71-58 with just over six minutes to play, Miller scored eight points, including three buckets in a row in transition, in a 13-3 run that brought the Bears within a point with 33 seconds left. The Eagles missed 12 of their final 13 shots of the contest.

Missouri State sent Brown to the free-throw line for a 1-and-1 with 17 seconds left, and the ball spun out. Johnson tried a triple from the top of the key that came off on the Bears' trip down the floor, and Smith got the rebound for the Eagles. He hit 1-of-2 from the charity stripe with 5.5 seconds left. Jarred Dixon drained a 3-pointer with 0.7 seconds left, but the Eagles were able to inbound the ball to end the contest.

Trailing 55-54 in the second half, the Eagles went on a 17-3 run to open a 71-58 cushion with 6:44 to go. Allsmiller and Hughes hit triples during the spurt, and Smith added a pair of jumpers.

Quotables

Junior guard [Ike Smith](#)

On late free throw

"Coach always tells us to shoot with confidence, and I went to the line and it was the same routine as Wake Forest, same as always."

On the game

"Missouri State is a good defensive team and elite rebounding team so we had to make shots, and the biggest thing was getting back in transition."

Head coach [Mark Byington](#)

"We talked about how good Missouri State was going to be, and I thought our guys would be really excited for the challenge. They didn't look like it in the locker room, but they played like it in the first couple minutes of the game. We got off to a good start, and our defense was really good early, faded there in different sections of the game, and it was one of those games where we were just good enough. We still have a lot of things to fix and a lot of room to improve."

"They went to a zone, and we got jump-shot happy. Then we did it when they were in man and when they were in zone. We have some guys who can do some things attacking the glass, and we didn't get into the teeth of the defense so that was one thing we can definitely fix."

"Early on, we were playing a lot of guys, and the guys who were coming in were productive. We shortened the bench a little bit in the second half because of match-ups, but in a tournament like this, you are going to need other guys for extended periods. For example, I thought in the first half, [Coye Simmons](#) was great. He set the tone, he got us a lead and he was tough and physical and did everything we needed. We don't win the game without [Coye Simmons](#) and the minutes he gave us."

Next up

Georgia Southern advances to the semifinals of the winner's bracket where the Eagles meet UMKC Tuesday in the Gulf Coast Showcase at Germain Arena. Tipoff is set for 5 p.m., and the Citizen's Bank Countdown to Tipoff Pregame Show on the Georgia Southern Sports Network starts at 4:30 p.m.

Georgia Southern Athletics provides current information on all its sports through its official website, GSEagles.com, which is fully responsive across all mobile devices. Information on Eagle athletics can also be found through social media channels facebook.com/GSAthletics, twitter.com/GSAthletics and Instagram.com/GSAthletics. To purchase tickets to Georgia Southern athletics events, visit GSEagles.com/tickets.

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